

MINUTES

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES 59th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION

WORKING GROUP INDIAN EDUCATION FOR ALL MONTANANS APPOINTED BY MADAM CHAIR EVE FRANKLIN, JOINT APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Call to Order: By **MADAM CHAIR WILLIAMS**, on January 26, 2005 at 6:00 P.M., in Room 102 Capitol.

ROLL CALL

Members Present:

Rep. Verdell Jackson (R)
Rep. Carol C. Juneau (D)
Sen. Carol Williams (D)

Members Excused: None.

Members Absent: None.

Staff Present: Mike Burke, OBPP
Jim Standaert, Legislative Branch
Diana Williams, Committee Secretary
Transcribed by Kyanne Kelly

Please Note. These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed. Tape counter notations refer to material immediately preceding.

Working Group Summary

Meeting #2: Inventory of Resources
Overview of Indian Education Summit
Overview of Indian Student Achievement
Public Discussion

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS opened the meeting by asking for a review of resources currently available for Indian Education for All.

Ellen Swaney, Office of Commissioner of Higher Education, gave a brief description of resources available at the University System. She said through national science grants, curriculum for math and science have been developed. She said there is information for K-12 available also.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU asked if there was information used at college level that could be adapted to the K-12 curriculum.

Ellen Swaney said the curriculum is not very accessible, but it is available. She said there is a lot of information, it is just not in one place.

Joe McDonald said SKC press has published quite a few books on this subject and there are many that others have published. He noted there is a lot of material in the school library but it is not often checked out. He said there is a beginning course on Kootenai that is on-line and the Salish Cultural Committee has published a lot of books. He said the schools are afraid to get into true tribal government because it could create hard feelings.

{Tape: 1; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 8.8 - 12.1}

REP. CAROL JUNEAU said there have been many books written over the last 20 years. She said it is now time to write lesson plans around the books to make them grade appropriate and ready for the classrooms.

Superintendent McCulloch passed out materials which the Office of Public Instruction has available for Indian Education for All.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e01\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e02\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e03\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e04\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e05\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e06\)](#)

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e07\)](#)

Mike Jetty, Office of Public Instruction, said there are also on-line documents on a web page for Indian Education for All. He said there is a Montana Indians book which is very good and has information written by each tribe. He said the next step is to make lesson plans from the book for K-12. His concern is there are a lot of books out there that are inaccurate and promote bias.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e08\)](#)

REP. CAROL JUNEAU said it is necessary to develop lesson plans which are age appropriate out of the material that is available. She also said there are currently resources available that could be used right now.

Superintendent McCulloch said there is a need to know what materials are culturally appropriate. She stated teachers need help in knowing what good material is and what is okay.

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS asked how teachers could get the materials.

Mike Jetty said they can it on-line or books such as Indians of Montana can be sent to them.

REP. VERDELL JACKSON talked about his Alaska experience working with villages developing curriculum for local school programs. He asked why the Indian students are dropping out at a higher rate than the other students.

Mike Jetty said it is a complex problem. It is hard to give a brief answer.

REP. VERDELL JACKSON spoke about a study in Alaska on the impact of television. He said the study found that television was detrimental to reading skills. He stated in terms of reading in Alaska there were two things: one was don't turn on the television, the second was television was detrimental to heritage and culture because television teaches a different culture, and also teaches different values. He said when you lose your heritage, it is like losing a parent. He stated heritage builds a sense of belonging and *this is the key* to feeling like you belong to the school. He further stated there is a need to develop a school program that students would love and enjoy through creating a sense of belonging, with similar values, culture, and purpose.

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 6.5 - 21.8}

Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education, said they are taking a fresh look at Indian Education for All. People on the campuses are developing new materials and it is a work in progress in the university system.

Roger Barber, Office of Higher Education said the difficulty is that the university system does not know the expectation academically. He asked if it is enough to have one course that every student has to take, or if the expectation more is than that.

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS said this is not Indian Education for All, it is Indian Education for all Montanans and the study group needs to find strategies to get there.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU said there is a need to provide training and resources for teachers about how to implement Indian Education for All. She asked if model programs already exist or if programs needed to be created.

Ellen Swaney said Dr. Peraquay had developed a learning program.
{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 27.1 - 28}

Mike Jetty said there is a course out of Bozeman developed for Indian Education and he thinks it is time to turn talk into action.

REP. VERDELL JACKSON said the most effective staff development is to give the teachers what they need and let them begin.

Superintendent McCulloch said she conducted a summit in October and produced some materials from that summit. She said money will determine what proposals from the summit can be implemented. She stated it was proposed at the summit to bring teachers together and train them the first year.

[EXHIBIT\(jeh20e09\)](#)

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Time Counter: 4.9 - 6}

REP. CAROL JUNEAU asked if the summaries on Page 9 were the Office of Educations priorities.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU said they were recommendations from the summit, not the Office of Public Instruction's priorities. She said what the Office of Public Instruction does depends on the resources available.

Everall Fox said the summary just condenses what happened at the summit.

REP. CAROL JUNEAU asked if the Office of Public Instruction would be preparing a final document that would go out to Summit participants delineating what the Office of Public Instruction was going to work on.

Superintendent McCulloch said she needs to know how much money will be made available before she can lay out the plans.

OVERVIEW OF INDIAN STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Mike Jetty said Indian students are not scoring at the level of white students. Some of the reasons for that are the standardized tests. He stated making the curriculum relevant and connecting the students with the curriculum is a big factor in improving achievement. He thinks there is a need for more emphasis on reading in the primary grades. He talked about a study done by Dr. Richard St. Germaine which showed that television has a big impact on tribal communities. He feels there is a need to look at the picture holistically by looking at what can be done in schools regardless of what happens in the community or the family. He said it would be helpful to look at things successful schools have done in spite of all the other barriers that have existed for Indian students. He said some of the factors they are finding is that successful schools have reading intervention and are reaching out to the community in different ways instead of always expecting the community to come to the school. He stated that different kinds of collaborations and partnerships help create effectiveness for students.

Joe Arrentry, Heart Butte School, said there is a need for policies that are flexible and don't push kids out. He used the example that in their value system, they mourn for four days and people keep their kids out of school during the mourning process but teachers come in with their value system and judge that as wrong. He said he teaches an Indian curriculum that speaks to cultural shame and cultural genocide as well as the poverty and alcoholism experienced on the reservation. He said if basic needs are not being met, it is hard to sit in school. He explained Indians have had bad experiences with the schools, they distrust the schools and their parents have had bad experiences as well. He thinks it is imperative to have Indian educators so students can see that education can lead somewhere. He summed it up by saying children need a sense of belonging; they need to be tribally and spiritually connected and to feel like they are wanted and nurtured.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 21.6 - 29.5}

REP. VERDELL JACKSON said in Alaska they studied the methods of successful school programs and then wrote a book about it. He said they found that understanding the values and heritage of the group they are teaching makes a difference. The study showed with Indian people different teaching methods work because they have a different learning style. The successful teachers seems to create a quiet, safe classroom.

Anna Whiting Sorrell, Governors Office, said, speaking as a mother, the most important thing for her daughters success in

school is a sense of people caring about her and her sense of belonging in that school district. Her relative is a teacher at the school and it gives the student great comfort to knowing that. She said another benefit is if the student gets out of line, the child's mother will be the first to know because she will see her teacher at breakfast or the basketball game. She said in Ronan there are very few native people working in the school.

{Tape: 2; Side: B; Approx. Time Counter: 10.8 - 13.9}

PUBLIC COMMENT

Bud Williams said he agrees the role modeling of Indians teachers is important and there is a need to attract Indians to become teachers and stay in Montana.

Ellen Swaney said cultures differ in four main ways: 1)How they view authority, 2) how they see relations, 3)how they see activity, and 4) how they view time. She said teachers who work in native communities have to understand those differences and how that impacts the way people learn. She said it doesn't matter how much ability they have in teaching the content, if they don't also address these four issues.

Denise Juneau said the key is making resources available for professional development. She said universities need to define the academic expectations and the Office of Public Instruction needs to define their policy. She stated Indian Education needs to be a strong component of the Legislature's definition of quality education. She said creating a sense of belonging is the important thing for students in experiencing a successful school experience. She encouraged development of accountability standards for schools in their implementation of Indian Education for All.

Rene Dubay said Indian students need to feel valued by teachers. She said the new 3'Rs are respect, relevance, and relationship.

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 7:55 P.M.

SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS, Chairman

DIANA WILLIAMS, Secretary
KYANNE KELLY, Transcriber

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Additional Exhibits:

EXHIBIT ([jeh20ead0.TIF](#))